The Inconsistency of Jesus's Prophecy about the End of the Age

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Introduction

In the episode of Jesus' prophecy about the "End of the Age" (συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος – sunteleias tou aionos), this phrase is translated into different meanings: "End of the World," "End of Times," "End of Humanity," etc. There are differences between these meanings, as we will explain later. The passage appears in the Gospels of Mark 13:1-37, Matthew 24:1-44, and Luke 21:5-33. Since most historians and researchers agree that the Gospel of Mark was the first to be composed, perhaps between 60 and 70 CE, that is, that it was finalized shortly after the beginning of Nero's persecutions (64 CE), or shortly before the destruction of the Second Temple of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Therefore, it was most likely the basis for the composition of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and will therefore be used here for commentary on the passages of this prophetic episode that has been awaited until now.

When συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος. – sunteleias tou aionos (genitive singular case of αἰών – aion: “era”, “generation”, “epoch”, “age”**)** is translated as “End of the World”, the meaning is the geological end of the planet, such as a monstrous collision of Earth with another planet of the same size, at a speed of more than 40,000 km/h, or the incineration of our planet with the increase in the size of the sun, as it transforms into a Red Giant, which will only occur in 5 billion years, a fact that will result in the total destruction of the planet and everything that exists on it. The “End of Times,” on the other hand, refers to the end of a specific period of time, such as the end of a month, the end of a year, the end of a century, the end of a cycle, etc. The “End of Humanity” signifies the total destruction of only the human species, preserving the many other species on the planet. This will result in the continuation of animal and plant life, just as happened with the extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago; they became extinct, but other species survived. Meanwhile, the “End of the Age” is the end of a period, such as the end of the Ice Age, the end of the Age of

Dinosaurs, the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, the Middle Ages, etc. Despite the imprecision in Jesus' prophecies, it seems that what he intended to say is that it will be the “End of the Age of Sinners,” for the beginning of the new Age of the Chosen. Therefore, the most appropriate translation is “End of the Age,” or “End of the Generation,” because Jesus predicted that catastrophes will occur, but it will not be the end for everyone, since the chosen ones will survive.

Since the catastrophic events did not occur during the generation of the first apostles, and the precise date was unknown to Jesus, it remains open-ended. This imprecision allows each Christian preacher to announce the imminence of these events at a time that seems convenient to them, thus frightening the faithful who believe in the possibility of their occurrence, as a strategy for gathering followers. Like most prophecies, this one by Jesus is also marked by imprecision, vagueness, obscurity, and a lack of specifics, leading it to be interpreted in different ways. Therefore, in order to avoid fragmentation, we will limit ourselves here to commenting within the context of the prophecy in the different passages of the New Testament, and not attempting to justify Jesus's accuracy through the authority of other passages, such as those that he performed miracles, worked healings, walked on water, fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament, was born of a virgin, is the Son of God, resurrected, etc., as many Christians do in order to divert attention and fragment the justifications, since these are cases to be analyzed individually. These justifications are like trying to base one belief on another belief, one myth on another myth, one superstition on another superstition, one rumor on another rumor, and one hypothesis on another hypothesis, and so on, and not on scientific rigor and historicity. Therefore, the justification here, for the incorrect interpretation, will be drawn from scientific and historical foundations, or even from other passages of the New Testament, but strictly within the context of the prophecy.

Greek text Mark 13:1-37 (NA28):

1 καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ λέγει αὐτῷ εἷς τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, διδάσκαλε, ἴδε ποταποὶ λίθοι καὶ ποταπαὶ οἰκοδομαί.
2 καὶ ὁ ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ, βλέπεις ταύτας τὰς μεγάλας οἰκοδομάς; οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῇ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὃς οὐ μὴ καταλυθῇ.
3 καὶ καθημένου αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἐπηρώτα αὐτὸν κατ᾽ ἰδίαν πέτρος καὶ ἰάκωβος καὶ ἰωάννης καὶ ἀνδρέας,
4 εἰπὸν ἡμῖν πότε ταῦτα ἔσται, καὶ τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα.
5 ὁ δὲ ἰησοῦς ἤρξατο λέγειν αὐτοῖς, βλέπετε μή τις ὑμᾶς πλανήσῃ·
6 πολλοὶ ἐλεύσονται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου λέγοντες ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ πολλοὺς πλανήσουσιν.
7 ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσητε πολέμους καὶ ἀκοὰς πολέμων, μὴ θροεῖσθε· δεῖ γενέσθαι, ἀλλ᾽ οὔπω τὸ τέλος.
8 ἐγερθήσεται γὰρ ἔθνος ἐπ᾽ ἔθνος καὶ βασιλεία ἐπὶ βασιλείαν, ἔσονται σεισμοὶ κατὰ τόπους, ἔσονται λιμοί· ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα.
9 βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτούς· παραδώσουσιν ὑμᾶς εἰς συνέδρια καὶ εἰς συναγωγὰς δαρήσεσθε καὶ ἐπὶ ἡγεμόνων καὶ βασιλέων σταθήσεσθε ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς.
10 καὶ εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη πρῶτον δεῖ κηρυχθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον.
11 καὶ ὅταν ἄγωσιν ὑμᾶς παραδιδόντες, μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε τί λαλήσητε, ἀλλ᾽ ὃ ἐὰν δοθῇ ὑμῖν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ τοῦτο λαλεῖτε, οὐ γάρ ἐστε ὑμεῖς οἱ λαλοῦντες ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον.
12 καὶ παραδώσει ἀδελφὸς ἀδελφὸν εἰς θάνατον καὶ πατὴρ τέκνον, καὶ ἐπαναστήσονται τέκνα ἐπὶ γονεῖς καὶ θανατώσουσιν αὐτούς·
13 καὶ ἔσεσθε μισούμενοι ὑπὸ πάντων διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου. ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος οὗτος σωθήσεται.
14 ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἑστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ, ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοείτω, τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη,
15 ὁ [δὲ] ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος μὴ καταβάτω μηδὲ εἰσελθάτω ἆραί τι ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ,
16 καὶ ὁ εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν μὴ ἐπιστρεψάτω εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω ἆραι τὸ ἱμάτιον αὐτοῦ.

17 οὐαὶ δὲ ταῖς ἐν γαστρὶ ἐχούσαις καὶ ταῖς θηλαζούσαις ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις.
18 προσεύχεσθε δὲ ἵνα μὴ γένηται χειμῶνος·
19 ἔσονται γὰρ αἱ ἡμέραι ἐκεῖναι θλῖψις οἵα οὐ γέγονεν τοιαύτη ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἣν ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς ἕως τοῦ νῦν καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται.
20 καὶ εἰ μὴ ἐκολόβωσεν κύριος τὰς ἡμέρας, οὐκ ἂν ἐσώθη πᾶσα σάρξ. ἀλλὰ διὰ τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς οὓς ἐξελέξατο ἐκολόβωσεν τὰς ἡμέρας.
21 καὶ τότε ἐάν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ, ἴδε ὧδε ὁ χριστός, ἴδε ἐκεῖ, μὴ πιστεύετε·
22 ἐγερθήσονται γὰρ ψευδόχριστοι καὶ ψευδοπροφῆται καὶ δώσουσιν σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πρὸς τὸ ἀποπλανᾶν, εἰ δυνατόν, τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς.
23 ὑμεῖς δὲ βλέπετε· προείρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα.
24 ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλῖψιν ἐκείνην ὁ ἥλιος σκοτισθήσεται, καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φέγγος αὐτῆς,
25 καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες ἔσονται ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πίπτοντες, καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς σαλευθήσονται.
26 καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλαις μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης.
27 καὶ τότε ἀποστελεῖ τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ ἐπισυνάξει τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς [αὐτοῦ] ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων ἀπ᾽ ἄκρου γῆς ἕως ἄκρου οὐρανοῦ.
28 ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς συκῆς μάθετε τὴν παραβολήν· ὅταν ἤδη ὁ κλάδος αὐτῆς ἁπαλὸς γένηται καὶ ἐκφύῃ τὰ φύλλα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγὺς τὸ θέρος ἐστίν.
29 οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ὅταν ἴδητε ταῦτα γινόμενα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγύς ἐστιν ἐπὶ θύραις.
30 ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη μέχρις οὗ ταῦτα πάντα γένηται.
31 ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσονται, οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρελεύσονται.
32 περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας οὐδεὶς οἶδεν, οὐδὲ οἱ ἄγγελοι ἐν οὐρανῷ οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός, εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ.
33 βλέπετε ἀγρυπνεῖτε· οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ καιρός ἐστιν.
34 ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἀπόδημος ἀφεὶς τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ δοὺς τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐξουσίαν, ἑκάστῳ τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ, καὶ τῷ θυρωρῷ ἐνετείλατο ἵνα γρηγορῇ.

35 γρηγορεῖτε οὖν, οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας ἔρχεται, ἢ ὀψὲ ἢ μεσονύκτιον ἢ ἀλεκτοροφωνίας ἢ πρωΐ,
36 μὴ ἐλθὼν ἐξαίφνης εὕρῃ ὑμᾶς καθεύδοντας.
37 ὃ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω, πᾶσιν λέγω, γρηγορεῖτε.

Translation with notes:

Mark 13:1: *As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Teacher, look! What enormous stones and magnificent buildings!"*
2. *Then Jesus asked him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down."*
Note: Christians interpret this passage as a prophecy of the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in 70 CE by the Romans. This prophecy did indeed come to pass, as only a giant wall remains of the temple, known today as the Wailing Wall, used by Jewish men and women for prayer. If the Gospel of Mark was composed before the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in 70 CE, this prophecy was indeed fulfilled. However, to be certain of this conclusion, it is necessary to have the autograph manuscript (from the author himself) with precise dating, and the oldest preserved manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark are copies from the 4th and 5th centuries CE. Since the New Testament manuscripts underwent many alterations and interpolations over time, it is not possible to know how much the text was altered during the period from the composition of this passage to the earliest surviving copies. The Gospel of Mark contains one of the most extensive interpolations in the New Testament, as its last verses (16:09-20), concerning the resurrection of Jesus, are definitively recognized by New Testament Textual Criticism as interpolations, since they do not appear in the oldest manuscripts and only begin to appear from several centuries later onwards. Despite this, all the New Testament editions consulted do not consider verse 13:02 as an interpolation, since it is present in the oldest and best preserved manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark from the 4th and 5th centuries onwards.

3. *While he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately:*
4. “Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to take place?”
5 Then Jesus began to say to them: “Watch out that no one deceives you.
6. Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and will deceive many.
Note: This is a fact that has always happened in the past and continues to happen today in almost all religions, that is, someone declaring themselves as an envoy or representative of another more revered figure. Jesus himself presented himself as an envoy of the Father and cited other prophets of the past to justify his teachings. Therefore, using the prestige of another to gain authority has always been a common practice in religious circles, not just in biblical religions. This doesn't specify any sign that something sinister is about to happen, much less a catastrophe. Before Jesus, many presented themselves as the Messiah. Therefore, if the presence of imposters were a sign of the end of the world, the world would have ended many times already, since these imposters have always existed; for the Jews, Jesus was an imposter. After this unfulfilled prophecy, hundreds of preachers claimed to speak in the name of Jesus, but the prophesied end has not happened to this day.
7. *When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; such things must happen, but the end is still to come.*
Note: Occurrences of wars and rumors of wars have always happened. The Old Testament is full of wars. It's difficult to find even a single year in which a war didn't occur in the world. Therefore, the occurrence of wars is not a sign of omen. Jesus inherited the Jewish culture of gathering followers through fear and panic, very common in the biblical mindset.
8. *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.*

Note: Uprisings of one nation against another, of kingdom against kingdom, of tribe against tribe, the occurrence of earthquakes and famine have also always happened throughout history; therefore, they are not specific signs of an imminent extraordinary event, and therefore do not represent specificities. Far more destructive wars than those known to Jesus have already occurred. The phrase "of the pains of childbirth" (ὠδίνων – odinon) is a Greek idiomatic expression meaning "pains," "sufferings," so to avoid strangeness, some biblical translators simply translate it as "pains."

9. "*As for you, be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils, flogged in the synagogues, and brought before governors and kings on account of me, as witnesses to them."* (Matthew 10:17 and 23:34)

Note: These events did indeed happen, but we are not certain whether they were in the original compositions or interpolated into early oral accounts before the written compositions, or into the earliest manuscript copies, as we do not have the autograph manuscripts, nor is it possible to know what the earliest oral accounts were like. We do not even know who the authors of the four Gospels were, hence the designation "Gospel According to St. Matthew," "Gospel According to St. Mark," etc., probably authors of the manuscript transcriptions of the oral accounts of the followers of the first apostles, during the years 70 to 110 CE. Textual commentaries do not point to this verse as an interpolation; it was included in the Critical Edition of the New Testament and is present in the earliest manuscripts (for an introduction to the knowledge of the textual alterations of the New Testament, see: EHRMAN, 2005). The greatest persecution of the first Christians was carried out by the Romans.

10 *And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.*

Note: Was Jesus suggesting that the End of the Ages would only happen when the gospel had been taught to all nations? That is, that the End will only occur after all nations have been evangelized? Would there be enough time to evangelize the nations before the imminent arrival of the End of the Ages? Or would preaching the gospel be sufficient regardless of the number of conversions? Well, if everyone is

evangelized, then everyone will be saved and there will be no sinners left to be punished during the catastrophes of the End of the Ages. Or rather, Jesus was probably predicting that, even after the work of evangelizing the nations, many would not convert, and these would be the ones punished. However, this prediction did not come true.

11. *When they bring you to trial and hand you over to the authorities, do not worry beforehand about what to say; just say whatever is given you at the time, for it will not be you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.*

12. *Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rise against their parents and have them put to death.*

Note: This is another event that has always occurred, although Jesus, in all his prophecies, is not specific or precise about dates, details, names, locations, numbers, etc., since these are occurrences that happened in large numbers in the context of power struggles in the past, and happen in smaller numbers today, especially in royal courts, tribal communities, and dictatorships. An idea can be drawn from the history of Roman emperors, since many were assassinated by family members or relatives due to power struggles. If family members rise up against each other, almost all of humanity will become extinct, leaving only one representative per family, since we all have family and relatives, which will represent a great reduction in the world population, a fact that will decrease the need for major natural catastrophes afterward, as many will already be dead, something like a pre-extermination. Due to the imprecision and vagueness of the prophecies, the reasons for a family member assassinating others are not specified.

13. *And you will be hated by everyone because of my name. But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved.*

Note: In reality, many early Christians were persecuted, imprisoned, others died as martyrs, and those who survived were never saved. Everything that the first Christians suffered at the beginning of Christianity was practiced in the form of cruelty by later Christians against Gentiles, Jews, atheists, and even scientists during the Middle Ages, when the church became the dominant and abusive religion. Strictly speaking, this is not properly a prophecy, since even in Jesus'

time, the first Christians were already hated and persecuted by the Jews; the greatest persecution was the condemnation and crucifixion instigated by the Jews. Therefore, the subsequent hatred and persecution were merely a growing continuation of what was already happening. So, to characterize it as a prophecy, the wording should be "you will continue to be hated." In short, Jesus was prophesying about a fact that was already happening in his time.

14. “*But when they see this desolating prophecy where it does not belong (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains;*

15. *Anyone on the terrace should not go down or go inside to get anything from the house;*

16. *Whoever is in the field should not go back to get their cloak.*

Note: It seems that Jesus is prophesying, just like Noah's flood, that this catastrophe will be through another flood, with the difference that those on the roof will not be reached by the waters, nor will those in the fields, even in valleys or mountains; therefore, it will be a flood with a smaller amount of water than Noah's flood, which covered the entire surface of the Earth. We know that a flood of this magnitude can only be a myth, since there is not enough water on Earth to reach and cover such a vast area.

17. *Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!*

18. *Pray that it will not be winter.*

Note: If the catastrophe happens across the entire planet, the seasons will necessarily be different in the two hemispheres; it seems that Jesus was then speaking only to the people of that region. Therefore, we perceive that in some passages he is referring to the occurrence of the End of the Ages worldwide, and in others, that it will happen only among his people.

19 *For in those days there will be suffering such as has not been since the beginning of God’s creation until now, no, nor ever shall be.*

Note: Due to a lack of knowledge about Natural History and Cultural History at that time, it was impossible for the ancients to know how much the first humans suffered during the different Ice Ages, some of

which led to the near extinction of the species. Therefore, due to ignorance of Natural History, Jesus was unable to prophesy that the two most devastating causes of the planet's destruction in the past were the ice ages and the impact of meteors and asteroids, especially the one that struck the Yucatán Peninsula, Mexico, 66 million years ago, causing a near-winter for 15 years, extinguishing 75% of species and all dinosaurs. We humans are here today thanks to the extinction of the dinosaurs.

20. *If the Lord had not shortened those days, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened those days.*

Note: Here Jesus is saying that the chosen ones will also suffer in those days of scourge, without mentioning how much they will suffer, and if the days of suffering are shortened, then the condemned will also benefit.

21. *If anyone tells you at that time, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or 'Look, there he is!', do not believe it.*

22. *False messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.*

Note: It has always been this way; each prophet thinks that other prophets and spiritual guides are false. Many Jews of that time considered Jesus a false prophet, and later even created passages (Talmud) and pejorative and hostile versions about Jesus (the Toledoth Yeshu collection), so it depends on which side you believe in. When Jesus said "false messiahs and false prophets," he was referring to Judaism, since there are no messiahs in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, Confucianism, and the countless tribal religions flourishing at that time. It is unclear whether the punishments would be only for the Jewish people or for all peoples in the world.

23. *But be alert; I have already told you everything.*

Note: On the contrary, Jesus did not say everything, as the prophecies are very vague, imprecise, and generalized, leaving more questions than answers, since they lack more details than information. If Jesus is asking his followers to "be alert," it is because the catastrophes will

happen while they are still alive, therefore immediately and not centuries later.

24. “ *But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,*

Note: The sun, one of trillions of stars in the universe, can only "dim" if the nuclear fusion process, which generates energy, ends within it. According to astronomers, this will only occur in 5 billion years, after the sun, a Yellow Giant, transforms into a Red Giant, increases in size, and consequently incinerates the nearest planets (Mercury, Venus, and Earth), then transforms into a dim White Dwarf. This is the life of stars the size of the sun, while the larger ones transform into Supernovas. Or the occurrence of a permanent total eclipse with the moon, that is, the moon would have to spontaneously stop its orbital movement in order to fix itself between the sun and the Earth. The ancients thought that the moon had its own light, and not that its light is a reflection of the sun.

The corresponding passage in the Gospel of Matthew 24:29, in its initial wording, is: “Immediately after the suffering of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light…”. The inclusion of the word εὐθέως – euteus (immediately, soon, already, as soon as) indicates the immediacy of the catastrophes and that they would happen within the lifetime of that generation (Mark 13:30; Matthew 24:34 and Luke 21:32). Now, if Jesus were referring to events that would happen many years or centuries later, he would not need to warn his followers to wait or watch for their immediate occurrence, because the events would happen after that generation, and they would no longer be there. Instead of εὐθέως (immediately), the passage from Mark (24.29) uses the word ἀλλὰ – alla (but, however), which avoids mentioning the brevity of the event.

25. *And the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.*

Note: The "falling of stars from the sky" is something bordering on the comical. Due to a lack of understanding of gravity, the ancients did not know that stars are suns and cannot fall because of gravity and dark energy. They thought that celestial bodies were like objects on Earth; if

they are not secure, they fall. Therefore, they created the idea of a "firmament," something that exists to hold the stars and celestial bodies in place in the sky. Hence the origin of the name for what we call outer space today. If the stars fall, the sun will also fall, as it is a star. Imagine trillions of stars falling to Earth; there are many stars with radii a thousand times greater than that of the sun, which is almost 1,400,000 km, therefore stars more than 1,400,000,000 (2,800,000,000 km in diameter) times larger than the sun. The largest known star currently is Stephenson 2-18, which has a size 2,150 times the radius of the sun (therefore 4,300,000,000 times its diameter), making it billions of times larger in volume. Some of these giant stars are almost half the size of the diameter of the Solar System, which is about 9 billion km wide, if considered from the sun to the Kuiper belt. These are approximate numbers, since many factors need to be taken into account. This is the most absurd prophecy of all, a portrait of the astronomical ignorance of Jesus and the people of that time and place. The nature of this "shaking of the powers in the heavens" is unclear; will it be the power to send rain, lightning, snow, meteorites, and toxic rain? Gravity was only discovered by Isaac Newton in the 17th century. Well, if all these catastrophes happen, not even the chosen ones will survive, since it is impossible for thousands of creatures to live on Earth with the sun darkened, the moon without light, without the powers of the sky (rain, dew, atmosphere, electricity, magnetism, magnetic field, etc.) and, what is even more impossible, after the fall of trillions of stars onto the planet, because everything on Earth will be destroyed, consequently the Kingdom of the Lord cannot be established.

26. “*Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.”*

Note: Now, if the sun darkens, then there will be no more heat on the planet, consequently there will be no evaporation, therefore there will be no clouds, since clouds are the result of the evaporation of water from the Earth's surface, so Jesus will not be able to come "in the clouds with great power and glory." Being semi-illiterate, this is yet another example of Jesus' meteorological ignorance.

27. *Then he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.*
Note: Here Jesus is mentioning that at the time of those catastrophic events, there will be chosen ones from the four winds (four corners), meaning the gospel will be spread throughout many regions of the planet. However, if the events are imminent, will there be time to evangelize every corner of the world?
28. "*Learn the lesson of the fig tree: when its branches become tender and sprout leaves, you know that summer is near.*
29. *Likewise, when you see these things happening, you know that he is near, right at the door.*
30. *Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.*
Note: The question debated by interpreters of this verse is whether the pronoun "this" (αὕτη – aute) refers to the generation of Jesus' first contemporary followers, or to a generation at some point in the future when these events occur. The argument of those who defend that Jesus is referring to his own generation, therefore an imminent event, is that if he were referring to a future generation, he would not have used the pronoun "this" (αὕτη – aute), but rather the pronoun "that" (εκείνη – ekeine), because it is distant in time. Therefore, this verse is crucial for Christians in order to understand whether Jesus was right or wrong in his prophecy; if it was his contemporary generation, the prophecy failed; if it was a future generation, without a determined time, he may be right someday, even though two thousand years have passed since then. The return of Jesus was, and still is, preached by thousands of Christians since the crucifixion. Even if he returns, he will have to update his teachings, since those of that time are very outdated for today. Another confirmation that Jesus was referring to the generation of his time appears in Matthew 16:28: "Truly I tell you, some who are standing here (ὧδε – ode) will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." That is, Jesus' followers will still be alive when the Son of Man comes, shortly after the catastrophes; therefore, the prophecy would be for events in that generation of Jesus' first followers.

31. *Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away .*
Note: While Jesus' words have indeed survived since then, he did not prophesy that they would be reproduced in over 30 gospels (canonical and apocryphal) with differing accounts of Jesus' sayings and deeds, nor that they would be significantly altered, added to, and omitted in subsequent manuscript copies, as confirmed by New Testament Textual Criticism. Therefore, with so many different gospels and textual alterations, it is now difficult to know exactly what Jesus said and did.
32. "*But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*
Note: Didn't Jesus say in one passage that "I and the Father are one" (John 10:39)? And in another passage (John 14:6): "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Therefore, what reason does the Father have to keep secrets from you?
33. " *Be careful, be on your guard, because you do not know when the time will come."*
Note: Not even Jesus knew.
34. *It is like a man who, going on a journey, leaves his house and entrusts tasks to his servants, to each his function, and orders the doorkeeper to watch.*
35. *Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know when the owner of the house will return—whether in the evening, at midnight, when the rooster crows, or at dawn.*
36. *Otherwise, he might find them sleeping when he comes unexpectedly.*
37. *What I say to you, I say to everyone: Watch!*
Note: Now, relying on signs that always seem to occur will leave followers permanently frightened and tense.
Below is the Greek text with a translation of Matthew 24:1-44 for comparison with the passage in Mark 13:1-37:

Matthew 24:1-44 (NA28):

24.01: And Jesus went out from the temple, and was walking: and his disciples came to show him the buildings of the temple;
Mark 13:1: And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, behold what manner of stones and what manner of buildings.
Lucas 21.
Translation: When Jesus left the temple and was going away, his disciples approached him to show him the buildings of the temple (01).
24.02. And he answered and said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.
Then he asked them, “Do you see all this? Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down” (02).
24.03. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?
While he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately and asked, “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” (03).
24.04. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that ye be not deceived: Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; be not troubled: for this must needs come to pass, but the end is not yet.
Jesus answered: “Watch out that no one deceives you.” (04).
24.05. For many will come in my name, saying, I am the Christ, and will deceive many.
For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah!' and will deceive many (05).
24.06. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see, be not troubled: for these things come to pass, but the end is not yet.
You will hear of wars and rumors of wars; do not be alarmed, for this must happen, but the end is not yet (06).
24.07. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places;

For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places: (07).
24.08. All these are the beginning of sorrows.
All this is nothing more than the beginning of labor pains (08).
24.09. then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake.
“Then they will hand you over to be tortured and killed, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name” (09).
24.10. and then many will be offended and will betray one another and hate one another;
Then many will turn away, and will betray one another and hate one another (10).
24.11. and many false prophets will arise and deceive many.
And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray (11).
24.12. and because lawlessness will increase, the love of many will grow cold.
And because of the increase of wickedness, the love of many will grow cold (12).
24.13. But he who endures to the end will be saved.
But he who endures to the end will be saved (13).
24.14. and this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then the end will come.
And this good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come (14).
24.15. When you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, let the reader understand,
“When you see the devastating disaster spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand) (15).
24.16. then those who were in Judea fled to the mountains,
Then those who are in Judea should flee to the mountains (16);
24.17. Let him who is on the housetop not come down to see what is out of his house,

Those on the roof must not come down to get things inside the house (17);
24.18. and let him who is in the field not turn back, behold his garment.
Anyone in the field should not go back to get a coat (18).
24.19. But woe to those who are with child and to those who give suck in those days!
Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! (19).
24.20. But pray that your flight may not take place on the Sabbath, in winter.
Pray that your escape will not be in winter or on a Saturday (20).
24.21. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will.
For then there will be great suffering, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be (21).
24.22. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.
And if those days were not shortened, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened (22).
24.23. then if he shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ, or, Here, believe it not;
So if anyone tells you, 'Look! Here is the Messiah!' or 'There he is!', do not believe it (23).
24.24. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect (24).
24.25. Behold, I have foretold you.
Pay attention, I warned you before (25).
24.26. If they say to you, Behold, he is in the wilderness, do not go out; Behold, he is in the treasures, do not believe it;
Therefore, if they say to you, 'Look! He is in the desert,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look! He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it (26).
24.27 For as the lightning comes from the east and shines even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man (27).
24.28. Wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.
Wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will gather (28).
24.29. Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
Immediately after the suffering of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken (29).
24.30. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory:
“Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory” (30).
24.31. And he shall send his angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other (31).
24.32. Now learn a parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.
“Learn the lesson of the fig tree: as soon as its branches become tender and sprout leaves, you know that summer is near” (32).
24.33. So also you, when you see all these things, know that it is near, at the doors.
Likewise, when you see all these things, you will know that he is near, at the very gates (33).
24.34. Verily I say unto you, That this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened (34).
24.35. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.
Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away (35).
24.36. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.
“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (36).
John 10:30 and 14:06
24.37. For as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
For as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man (37).
24.38. For as they were in the days before the flood, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,
For, just as in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, (38).
24.39. and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
And they did not realize it until the flood came and swept them all away; so also will be the coming of the Son of Man (39).
24.40. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.
Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left (40).
24.41. Two women are grinding at the mill; one is taken and the other is left.
Two women grinding flour together; one will be taken and the other left.
24.42. Be on your guard therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come (42).
24.43. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have let his house be broken into.
But understand this: if the homeowner had known what time of night the thief would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed his house to be broken into (43).
24.44. Therefore you also be ready, for at an hour you do not expect the Son of Man is coming.
Therefore, you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him (44).

This work is suggested as an introduction to the study of changes in the New Testament.

EHRMAN, Bart D. *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005.